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Book Linking CIA To Drugs Printed

NEW YORK (Reuter) A book alleging that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency helps international heroin traffickers is published this week — despite objections from the government agency which rarely breaks its silence.

The controversial manuscript by Alfred McKay, a 27-year-old Yale graduate student in history, was made available to the CIA and — despite their challenges — went to press without a word being changed, according to the publishers, Harper and Row.

Entitled "The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia," the book claims that many of the governments and military men in Southeast Asia are profitably involved in the production and transportation of drugs.

McKAY SAYS they receive aid and support from the U.S. government and its agencies, including the CIA.

The U.S. government is involved in at least three ways, according to McKay — ignoring the activity of known heroin traffickers, knowingly allowing American aircraft and crews to be subverted for the transport of heroin and opium, and allying with groups engaged in drug traffic.

Before publication, the CIA approached Harper and Row asking to read the manuscript. It said it could show that some of the claims about the agency's involvement were false or distorted and none was based on convincing evidence.

they allowed the CIA to study the manuscript. "Although no specific factual errors were cited, some of Mr. McKay's sources were questioned and others flatly contradicted," Harper and Row said.

Brooks Taylor, vice president of Harper and Row, said the CIA merely objected to the book and in no way tried to censor publication, set for Thursday.

"They tried to persuade us not to publish. On the basis of what they told us, they certainly hoped we would not publish," he said today.

IN WASHINGTON, a CIA spokesman declined to comment on the book.

CIA Director Richard Helms told a newspaper editors meeting last year, "There is this arrant nonsense, for example, that the central Intelligence Agency is involved in the world drug trade. We are not."

"We are heavily engaged in tracing the foreign route of the drug traffic for the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. We hope we are helping with a solution. We know we are not contributing to the problem."

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